GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:107
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2004
CONTAMINATED BLOOD
Purandeswari Smt. Daggubati;Rawale Shri Mohan

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether UK has exported thousands of blood product samples potentially contaminated with a human form of mad cow disease to 11 countries including India;

(b) if so, whether atleast 5 to 6 countries have been identified as most at risk from the blood products;

(c) if so, the extent to which these reports have been found true;

(d) whether the Government has investigated these reports;

(e) if so, the findings thereon;

(f) whether the Government has received any reports from the WHO in this regard; and

(g) if so, the steps the Government has taken to check such imports?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS)

(a)to(g): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 107 FOR 8TH DECEMBER, 2004

A news item captioned `UK sent bad blood to India` appeared in various National Newspapers in India on 28th September 2004. These newspapers alleged that Britain had exported human blood products contaminated with human form of mad cow disease to 11 countries in late 1990 and that 5 to 6 countries have been identified as most at risk from the said blood products.

However, on enquiry, the British High Commission intimated that only a small quantity i.e. 22 vials of human normal immunoglobulin batch no. VGC 085 were supplied to India on 14th November 1997. India has been identified as one of the countries where the infectivity level of batches was either too low or quantity supplied too small for any patient to have passed the `at risk` threshold as per new UK criteria, necessitating the need for public health precautions. The report thus appear to be exaggerated.

On inquiry, it was ascertained that M/s Bio Products Laboratory, U.K. supplied 22 vials ofvigam -S 5 g (Human Normal Immunoglobulin) lot no. VGC 085, mfg. Date July 97 and expiry date August 99 to M/s Genexx Chemicals Pvt. Ltd., N-26, Malviya Nagar, New Delhi-17.

As per Information available from WHO, there is no credible instance of transmission of Variant Creutzfeldt − Jakob Disease (vCJD) through blood products. The National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore, has also reported that no case of vCJD is reported from India till date. So far, the Government has not received any report of incidence of vCJD disease through blood products in this country.

Further, on enquiry, it has also been clarified that the blood product manufacturers in U.K. are now using imported plasma from USA since 1998 to manufacture blood products in order to avoid the risk of vCJD.